(b) and (c) After disinvestments, the financial health of M/s. HTL Ltd. was severely affected due to acute shortfall in working capatial requirements and lack of orders from the market.

(d) After its disinvestments on 16-10-2001, M/s HTL Ltd. is no more a Public Sector Undertaking and the Government has no direct control over its activities. However, the Government through its nominees on the Board of Directors keeps a watch on the activities of the company. The latest report of CAG does not contain measures to improve the financial position of M/s HTL Ltd.

Recruitment of workers in BSNL, Almora

2428. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether BSNL, Almora has recruited workers on daily wages; and

(b) if so, the details of workers, departments, wage and duration of their employment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Computerised post offices in Tamil Nadu

2429. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of computerized post offices in Tamil Nadu, district-wise;

(b) the steps taken to improve facilities on savings bank, insurance schemes etc. through computerization; and

(c) the steps taken to reduce the waiting time at various counters in post offices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) 889 Post Ofifces have been provided with computers in the State of Tamil Nadu. District-wise details are given in the Annexure. (*See* Appendix 209. Annexure No 7.]

(b) Out of 889 Post Offices as stated at (a) above, postal counter operations and saving bank functions are already computerized in 663 and 86 Post offices respectively to provide improved services to the customers. Postal life Insurance work has been computerized in the Circle/ Regional administrative offices ensuring faster issue of policy bonds and porcessing of claim cases.

(c) Computerisation of the counter operations and introduction of multipurpose counter machines for single window counter service has helped to reduce the waiting time at the counters.

Pan-indian satellite telephone service

2430. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a plan has been formulated to set up a pan indian satellite telephone service by leveraging the INSAT satellites of the Department of Space for network expansion and strategic applications;

(b) if so, the details thereof and its present status;

(c) to what extent the satellite telephone service would cover additional areas which have no communication network presently;

(d) whether any telecom operators have been licensed to operate the satellite telephone services; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir. BSNL has planned to provide Village Public Telephones (VPTs) to 14,183 villages in inaccessible , far flung and remote